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ABSTRACT

A survey of high school seniors was conducted in Alaska to provide a profile of Alaskan seniors and their postsecondary plans. A written questionnaire, consisting of 17 questions, was sent to all public secondary schools identified as having a twelfth grade and to all senior correspondence students. Responses represented 47 of the 51 districts, and 68 of the 96 schools with a twelfth grade. Of the total 5,123 seniors identified, 2,499 returned the questionnaire. Four types of variables of questions were included: demographic characteristics of the student, high school experiences, postsecondary plans, and detailed plans of respondents planning or pursuing some type of postsecondary education. Two specific questions that were analyzed are: how seniors planning to attend differ from those who are not, and where seniors planning to go to college intend to go and what factors enter into that choice. Seniors were found to be quite satisfied with their high school experiences, but a large number feel in need of additional assistance or education in deciding on a career or education, improving mathematics skills, expressing their ideas in writing, and improving reading skills. The great majority of seniors who plan to pursue education at a postsecondary level plan to leave Alaska. A sample survey form is appended. (SW)

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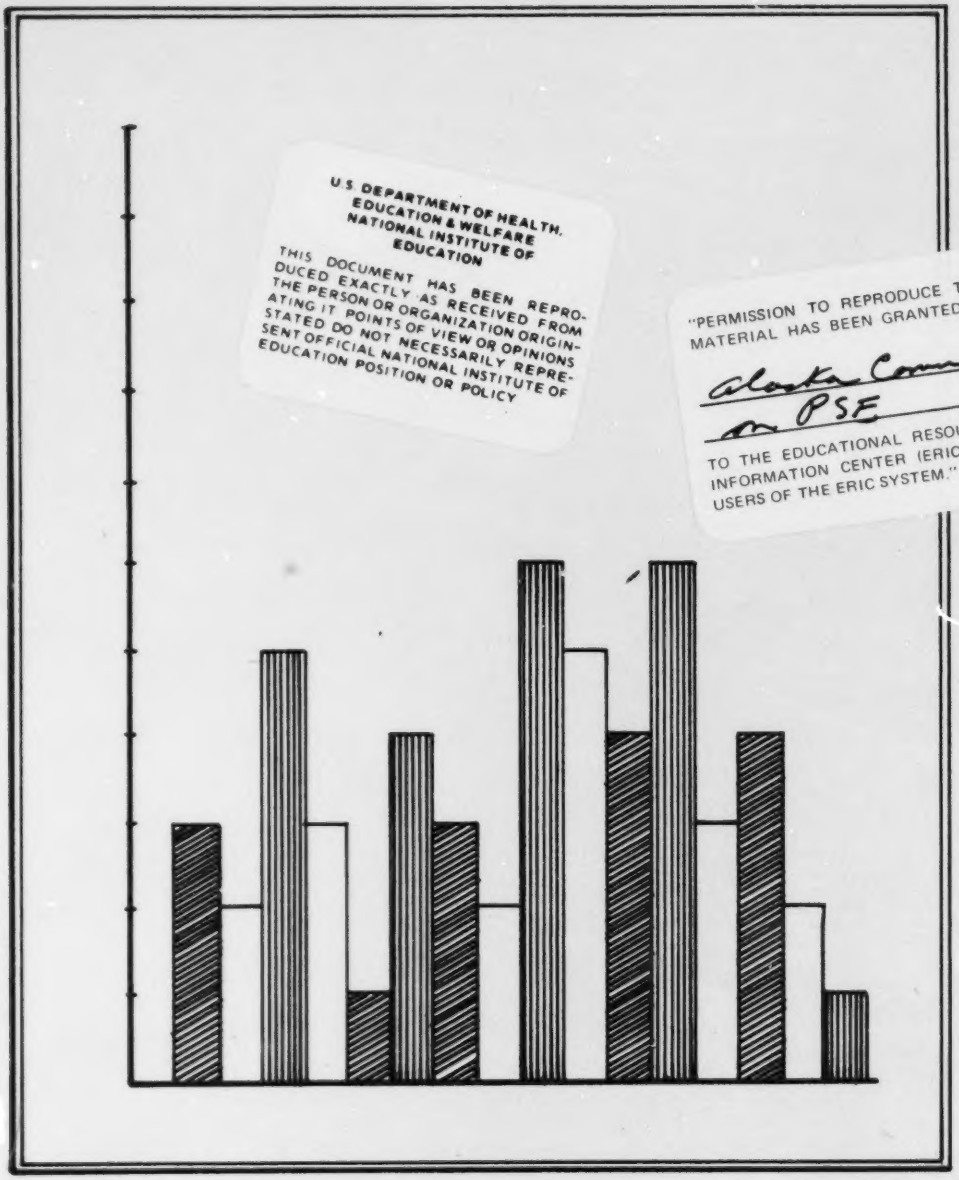

ALASKA High School Seniors SURVEY REPORT

1977-78

HE016 624

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SURVEY REPORT

August 1978

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Pouch F
Juneau, Alaska 99811

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INTRODUCTION

Alaskan high school seniors taking pre-college aptitude tests in 1975 and 1976 indicated that their first choice for college attendance was the State of Washington - not Alaska.[1] Alaskans applying for undergraduate state student loans for 1977-78 elected to use 67% of those loans for undergraduate programs "outside."[2] A survey of Anchorage high school students, conducted by the University of Alaska - Anchorage, reported that 73% of the students wanted to go "outside" for college.[3]

What are the causes of this exodus from Alaska by those persons seeking education beyond high school? To date, no one really knows, but a number of theories are offered annually. These theories include: students want to see other parts of the country; Alaskan program offerings are too limited; the state loan program encourages students to leave the state; college "campus life," including fraternal organizations and major inter-collegiate athletic programs are unavailable in Alaska; the only resident public institution is in Fairbanks, which is costly and in a somewhat inclement environment; the quality and reputation of some institutions is higher in the Lower 48; and parental influence encourages students to non-Alaskan institutions.

[1]Alexander E. Hazelton. "Highlights of the 1976 Alaskan High School Seniors Scholastic Aptitude Test Results". Alaska Department of Education Report, November, 1976.

[2]"State of Alaska Student Loan Program Annual Report: 1976-77". Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, December, 1977.

[3]Mel Carter. "Anchorage High School Student Survey". University of Alaska - Anchorage. January, 1978.

If some of these often-posed theories were found to be accurate, there could be very important implications for postsecondary planning in Alaska. However, until the time of the University of Alaska Anchorage survey, little valid information was available on this question of student choice. The results of the Anchorage survey, which included high school students at all levels, revealed that the largest single factor for students wanting to leave the state for schooling was simply the "desire to get away from home".[4]

In an attempt to garner more information on this issue, the Alaskan Commission on Postsecondary Education, in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Education and with the assistance of the University of Alaska and the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals, conducted a statewide survey of high school seniors. The survey went to every institution in the State which offered education at a twelfth grade level. The results of the survey are presented in this report.

[4]Ibid.

METHODOLOGY

A written questionnaire, consisting of seventeen questions, was sent to all public secondary schools identified as having a twelfth grade and to all senior correspondence students. The questions were of a check-list-response type (see copy of questionnaire in Appendix A). With the exception of two school districts (Juneau, which would not participate, and Bethel which failed to respond), the responses were geographically representative of the state. Responses represented 47 of the 51 districts (92%) and 68 of the 96 schools with a twelfth grade (71%). Of the total 5,123 seniors identified, 2,499 (49%) returned questionnaires.

Four types of variables (or general groupings) of questions were included. These were:

1. those describing demographic characteristics of the student (sex, race, primary home language, size of city, etc.);
2. those describing the high school experiences of the students (evaluation of certain school experiences, and identification of possible areas of weakness);
3. those describing the postsecondary plans of the respondent (occupational choices, college intentions, post-high school plans, etc.); and
4. those describing the more detailed plans of that group of respondents planning on pursuing some type of postsecondary education.

Further analysis of selected groups of respondents was somewhat limited statistically due to the small sample sizes in certain cells, therefore regression analysis and factor analysis of selected questions (which was originally intended) had to be foregone. Two general, questions were explored further.

1. How do those seniors who are planning to continue schooling at a postsecondary level differ from those who are not? Do differences occur relative to:

   a. urban vs. rural communities,

   b. race of respondent,

   c. English being the primary spoken language in the home of the respondent,

   d. sex of respondent,

   e. respondent's rating of high school experience,

   f. respondent's reported need for additional training or education, and

   g. respondent's work experience.

2. Of those seniors planning to continue their education at a postsecondary level, where do they intend to go and what factors enter into that choice?

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Demographic Data

The demographic data indicate that the questionnaire results are highly representative of the general senior population. Of those students responding 51% were male and 49% female; 75% were caucasion, 15% were Alaskan Native, 3% were Black, and small percentage (one or less) were American Indian, Oriental, Hispanic, or other; 93% of respondents come from homes where English is the primary language; and only 3% of the respondents had no work experience. (Details of these results are in Appendix B, Tables 15-19.

B. High S hool Experience

Senior ratings. Respondents were asked to rate various aspects of their high school experiences, from outstanding to bad or not provided, on a scale from one to seven (average being 4.0). The results, presented in Table 1, indicate that the seniors were very satisfied with their high school experiences, in fact, all activities listed were rated above average by most respondents (i.e., average rating of less than 4.0).

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SELECTED HIGH SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND AVERAGE RATING OF EACH CHARACTERISTIC

Characteristic	Average Rating	Outstanding/ Excellent		Good/Average		Not So Good/ Bad		Total
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	
Variety of Courses	3.4	481	20.8	1469	63.3	368	15.9	2318
Quality of Instruction	3.1	529	22.8	1564	67.3	171	7.4	2324
Counseling and Guidance Services	3.0	892	39.4	1017	44.9	356	15.7	2265
Library Facilities	3.1	798	35.2	1157	51.1	310	13.7	2265
Special Help	3.3	539	27.6	1091	55.7	327	16.7	1957
Programs for Outstanding Students	3.3	524	28.1	1000	53.5	344	18.4	1868
School Rules and Regulations	3.8	408	18.0	1228	54.1	633	27.9	2269
Discipline	3.7	413	18.7	1273	57.5	526	23.8	2212
Promotion Policy	3.6	263	14.0	1284	68.7	323	17.3	1870
Assignment of Grades or Marks	3.3	522	22.8	1524	66.7	239	10.5	2285
Laboratory Facilities	3.5	521	24.6	1157	54.5	443	20.9	2121
Athletic and Recreation Facilities	2.9	920	41.6	1050	47.5	244	11.0	2214
Vocational Training	2.8	923	42.8	1029	47.7	206	9.5	2158
Overall High School Experience	3.1	601	25.8	1562	67.2	163	7.0	2326

C. Postsecondary Plans

Occupational Choice. A list of 338 occupations was offered to the seniors, and the students were to select their first and second choices. These occupations were grouped into eighteen major categories, but still the response rate was so small that little inference could be made. Therefore, only the top five occupational choices are listed here. The general field of Business and Commerce received the largest response rate for both first and second choices, but the specific fields of Secretarial Studies and Automobile Repair were the most popular among the seniors. The first and second choices of the seniors were (in descending order):

First Choice	Second Choice
Business Administration	Automobile Repair
Secretarial Studies	Secretarial Studies
Automobile Repair	Heavy Equipment Operating
Law	Accounting
Accounting	Business Management

Post High School Plans. The seniors were given eleven possible choices of post high school activities and were asked to indicate what they felt was most likely for them. Over half indicated plans to attend a two- or four-year college, and over sixty percent planned some type of formal postsecondary educational training. The most popluar choice of the seniors was to attend a four-year college, and the least popular choice was to be a full time homemaker (however, the sex of the respondent could effect this choice greatly). As can be seen in Table 3, over twenty percent of the seniors were uncertain as to what they would do after high school.

Not unexpectedly, the characteristic receiving the highest percentage of negative responses was School Rules and Regulations. It is interesting to note that the characteristic receiving the lowest percentage of negative responses was the Quality of Instruction. Those characteristics felt by the greatest number of seniors to be outstanding or excellent were Vocational Training and Athletic and Recreational Facilities, and Counseling and Guidance Services. Those characteristics receiving the fewest outstanding and excellent ratings were Promotion Policy, School Rules and Regulations, and Discipline.

Areas of Improvement. The seniors were asked if they felt they needed more assistance in four selected areas. A surprising number of seniors (over a third in all areas but one) felt in need of further assistance in math, career planning, and writing skills. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2

SENIOR EXPRESSED NEED FOR
FURTHER ASSISTANCE IN SELECTED AREAS

Type of Assistance	Needed		Not Needed		Total
	NO.	%	NO.	%	
Expressing Ideas in Writing	868	34.7	1631	65.3	2499
Improving Reading Skills	778	31.1	1721	68.9	2499
Improving Math Skills	999	40.0	1500	60.0	2499
Deciding on Career or Education	1004	40.1	1495	59.9	2499

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
MOST LIKELY ACTIVITY AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Activity	Number	Percent
Attend a 4-Year College	867	34.7
Attend a 2-Year College	236	9.4
Attend a 2-Year , then 4-Year College	167	6.7
Attend Public Technical School	103	4.1
Attend Private Business or Trade School	229	9.2
Enter Apprentice Training	137	5.5
Become Full-Time Homemaker	24	1.0
Join Military	61	2.4
Become Full-Time Employed	164	6.6
Just Take Things As They Come	235	9.4
Don't Know	189	7.6
No Response	87	3.4
Total	2499	100.0

D. Postsecondary Educational Plans

Those seniors who planned on pursuing education beyond high school were asked to respond to a series of questions related to those plans. Throughout these questions, the number of students responding varied greatly. For example, 1,602 seniors indicated they planned to attend a postsecondary educational institution after high school, yet, when asked in what state they would pursue such education, 1,998 students responded. Similarily,

618 students indicated attendance in Alaska, while 866 indicated specific Alaskan institutions. For the purposes of this report, it shall be assumed that such results indicate a "what if" interpretation by the seniors (i.e., what if you were going to school - then when would you attend? What if you were to attend in Alaska - which school would you go to?)

State of Attendance. Nearly one third of the seniors indicated that they would pursue postsecondary educational programs within Alaska (30.9%). The remaining 69.1% would leave the state for their education. This result is in keeping with other in-state/out-of-state attendance indicators. Contrary, however, to the information obtained by standardized pre-college admissions tests, the first choice of attendance is Alaska - not Washington. This distribution by state is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
INTENDED STATE OF POSTSECONDARY ATTENDANCE

State	Number	Percent
Alaska	618	30.9
Washington	200	10.0
California	154	7.7
Oregon	131	6.6
Colorado	88	4.4
Hawaii	76	3.8
Idaho	34	1.7
Utah	23	1.2
Other	674	33.7
Total	1198	100.0

Alaskan Attendance. When asked which institution in Alaska the students planned to attend, nearly thirty percent (29.9) indicated the University of Alaska - Anchorage. The second most popular choice, as indicated in Table 5, was Anchorage Community College. In fact, of those persons selecting a two or four-year in-state college, over sixty percent (64.4) would go to an institution in Anchorage. It should be remembered that the seniors of Juneau and Bethel are not included in the survey. Hence, the low response rate for Juneau-Douglas Community College, University of Alaska - Juneau, and Kuskokwim Community College are probably more a result of omission rather than reflecting student choice from those areas. However, the University of Alaska - Juneau and Juneau-Douglas Community College seem to have little drawing power from other portions of the State.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
CHOICE OF ALASKAN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION

Institution	Number	Percent
Anchorage Community College	189	21.8
Juneau-Douglas Community College	2	.2
Kenai Peninsula Community College	16	1.8
Ketchikan Community College	9	1.0
Kodiak Community College	6	.7
Kuskokwim Community College	4	.5
Matanuska-Susitna Community College	11	1.3
Northwest Community College	0	-
Sitka Community College	4	.5
Tanana Valley Community College	6	.7
Community College Sub-Total	247	28.5
University of Alaska - Anchorage	259	29.9
University of Alaska - Fairbanks	178	20.6
University of Alaska - Juneau	2	.2
University Center Sub-Total	439	50.7
Alaska Methodist University	7	.8
Inupiat University	12	1.4
Sheldon Jackson College	2	.2
Private College Sub-Total	21	2.4
University of Alaska - Extension	17	2.0
Business Trade School	142	16.4
Total	866	100.0

Reasons for Institutional Choice. The question of why the seniors chose to attend a particular institution was next posed. Nineteen possible reasons were offered, and the students were to pick the five top which influenced their decision for choosing the institution they indicated. The number of students ranking the reasons at each of the five levels is presented in Table 6, but since this can be somewhat confusing to interpret, an average ranking was determined for each reason. The reasons are listed in Table 6 in descending order of rank. A number of interesting inferences may be drawn from these results. Clearly the least influential reason for a student's choice (of the nineteen listed) was the encouragement of college representatives. This could mean either that college representatives are not actively recruiting or that, if they are recruiting, the recruiting techniques are not very effective.

The reputation or prestige of the school is felt to be the most influential determinant followed quite closely by the availability of particular programs. Closeness to home and religious atmosphere were also highly influential in the decisions of the seniors. It should be noted, however, that by weighting the reasons in the manner of averaging response ranks the best interpretation would be, for example, of those students who felt religious atmosphere was any determinant at all (at least of the top five), a high number felt it to be very important. This interpretative caution is added since an alternative weighting system could produce different results.

TABLE 6

REASONS FOR SELECTING
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Reason	Average Ranking	Rate of Influence				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Reputation of School	2.054	280	122	75	43	50
Availability of Program	2.059	334	183	100	68	47
Close to Home	2.069	290	142	83	65	39
Religious Atmosphere	2.190	62	29	16	18	12
Geographic Location/Climate	2.533	161	182	142	76	59
Parental/Relative Encouragement	2.643	116	105	98	76	51
Low Tuition and Living Expenses	2.692	96	119	100	72	52
Availability of Financial Aid	2.714	51	103	68	46	36
Availability of Job While in School	2.736	70	98	94	62	40
Intercollegiate Athletic Program	2.777	40	47	52	33	25
Parents Attended Same School	2.885	9	13	15	5	10
Wanted to See Lower 48	3.113	31	33	29	36	39
Encouragement of Teachers	3.160	19	28	25	31	28
Friends also Attending	3.206	37	60	69	56	69
Intramural Athletics	3.366	13	27	25	31	25
Availability of Campus Housing	3.524	14	21	50	57	45
Student Organizations	3.756	7	7	14	30	28
Sororities/Fraternities on Campus	3.792	1	3	4	8	8
Encouragement of College Reps.	4.576	2	15	11	9	22

Continuing with the example of religious atmosphere; if the number of individuals selecting each of the reasons is used without averaging, religious atmosphere would rank tenth, of the nineteen, rather than fourth as in Table 6.

Further analysis, relating reasons to actual choices is presented later in this report.

E. Financial Aid Information

Since the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education administers the Alaska State Loan Program and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Student Exchange Program, an attempt was made to see how familiar the seniors were with the availability of these programs. Based upon a total of 1,998 seniors planning some form of postsecondary education, nearly half reported they were unfamiliar with any of the financial aid programs listed. As can be seen in Table 7, the Alaska State Loan Program is the program with which most students were familiar, followed by the Basic Educational Opportunities Grant (BEOG) Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Grant Program. From the high percentages of intended utilization of assistance programs with which the students were familiar (also presented in Table 7), it would appear that these students needing assistance are able to at least gain information on the programs.

TABLE 7

SENIOR FAMILIARITY AND INTENDED
USE OF SELECTED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Financial Assistance Program	Familiar With		Intend to Use	
	NO.	% of 1,998	NO.	% of Those Familiar
BEOG	284	14.2	239	84.2
GSL	135	6.8	99	73.3
Alaska State Loan Program	461	23.1	416	90.2
WICHE	77	3.9	36	46.8
Native Corporations	82	4.1	87	106.1
CETA	91	4.6	32	35.2
BIA	204	10.2	183	89.7
None	931	46.6	894	96.3

F. Differences Between Seniors Planning Postsecondary Education and Those Not.

Size of Community. As the size of the community, in which the high school is located, increases, the percent of seniors planning on attending a two or four-year college also increases. Also, as can be seen in Table 8, the percent of seniors who are undecided about their post high school plans is inversely related to the size of the community. The smaller the community, the larger the proportion of undecided seniors.

A number of factors could effect these particular results. First, the larger the community, the more likely there is a college or extension center located nearby. This would increase the senior's awareness of

educational opportunities available after high school and could tend to raise the proportion of seniors planning further education and lower the percentage who are undecided. A second factor could be the counseling staff available in the larger high schools and communities. This influence may not be as great since there appeared to be no difference in how urban vs. rural seniors rated their counseling services. A third influencing factor could be the socio-economic characteristics of a rural vs. urban community. The type of employment opportunities available, the education and training level of community members, the general community life style could all effect the plans of a graduating senior. A great deal more detail, than was provided through this survey, would be needed to adequately draw any meaningful conclusions from this finding.

Race. Black and Oriental seniors indicated substantially greater intentions of going to college after high school. Caucasians were far behind, and Alaskan natives still farther behind. These data are presented in Table 9 and graphically in Figure 1.

The percentage of seniors who are undecided as to their post high school plans was heaviest among American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Hispanics. Here again, the reasons for these differences would need further study before explanations could be offered. It is quite interesting to find that the Black seniors, with 68% planning college attendance, had the lowest undecided rate, followed by the Oriental seniors, with 67% planning college attendance.

TABLE 8

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND SIZE OF COMMUNITY

Post High School Plans	Community Size						Total
	Under 500	500-999	1,000-4,999	5,000-19,999	20,000-49,999	50,000 Plus	
Four-Year College	22%	24%	30%	33%	31%	44%	35%
Two-Year College	13	10	10	8	11	9	9
Two-then Four-Year College	3	9	7	6	4	8	7
Technical School	2	3	4	4	4	5	4
Business or Trade School	9	6	9	11	12	8	9
Apprentice Program	12	7	5	7	4	3	5
Homemaker	--	2	1	1	1	1	1
Military	3	5	3	3	1	1	2
Full-Time Job	7	5	6	7	9	7	7
Undecided	29	29	25		23	14	21
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND RACE

Post High School Plans	Alaska Native	Black	American Indian	Oriental	Caucasian	Hispanic	Other	All Races
Four-Year College	20%	52%	12%	61%	37%	41%	34%	35%
Two-Year College	13	10	12	3	9	6	9	10
Two-then Four-Year College	4	6	4	3	7	--	6	7
Technical School	3	5	8	6	4	--	6	4
Business or Trade School	10	10	4	12	9	6	5	9
Apprentice Program	10	--	16	3	5	6	6	5
Homemaker	1	3	--	--	1	--	2	1
Military	3	3	--	3	2	6	5	2
Full-Time Job	6	6	8	--	7	12	6	7
Undecided	30	8	36	9	19	23	21	20
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

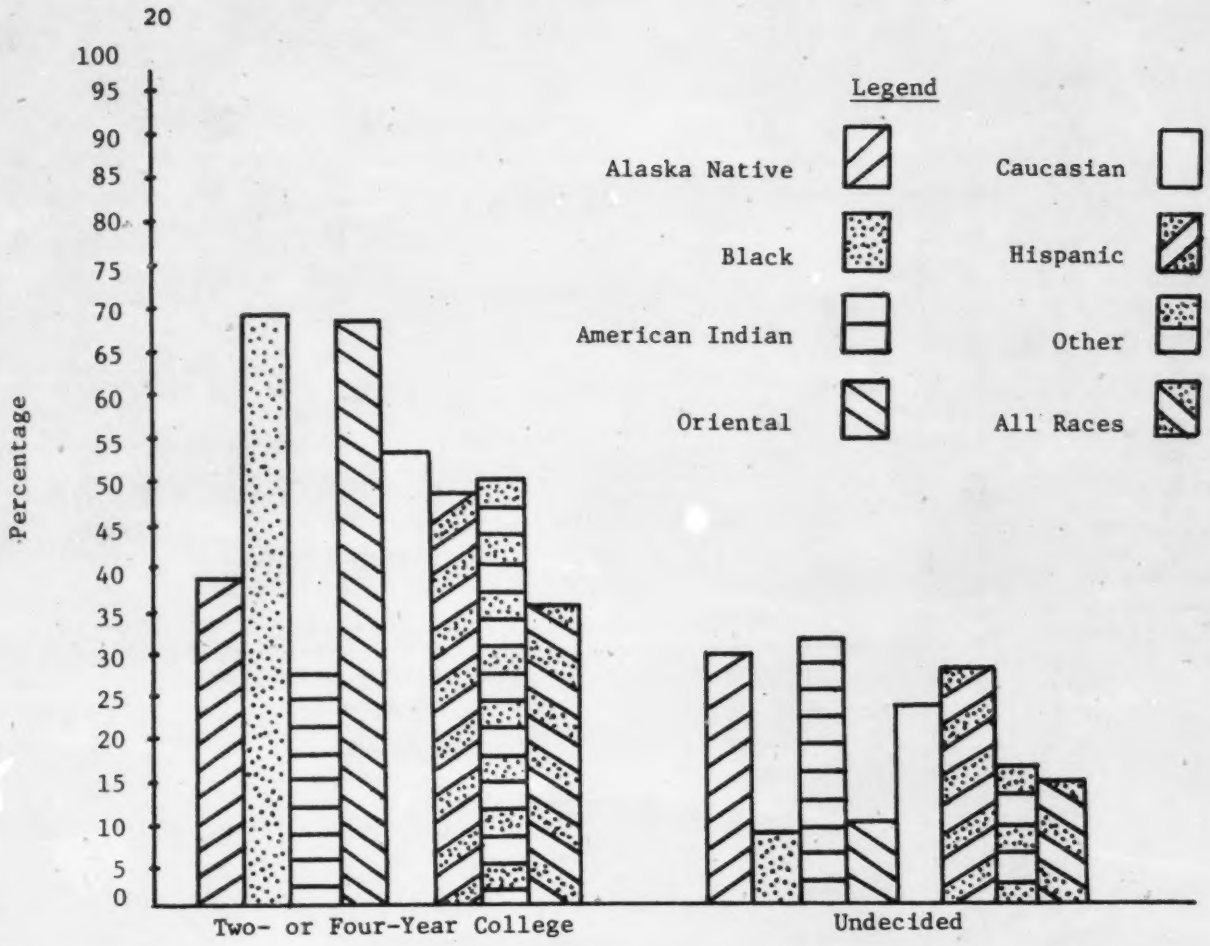

Figure 1. Distribution of Seniors Going to College or Undecided by Race.

English as Primary Language in Home. Although differences did occur between those seniors coming from homes in which English is the primary spoken language and those coming from homes where another language is primary, the differences were not large enough to be significant. For example, 52% of Primary English and 48% of non-English planned college attendance.

In an effort to better identify those students from non-English homes, a cross-tabulation on the basis of race was run. The results of this cross-tabulation, presented in Figure 2, indicated that those seniors coming from homes in which English is not the primary spoken language were most often Alaskan Natives. The Alaskan Natives and the Oriental seniors were the respondents which indicated the largest proportion of non-English homes.

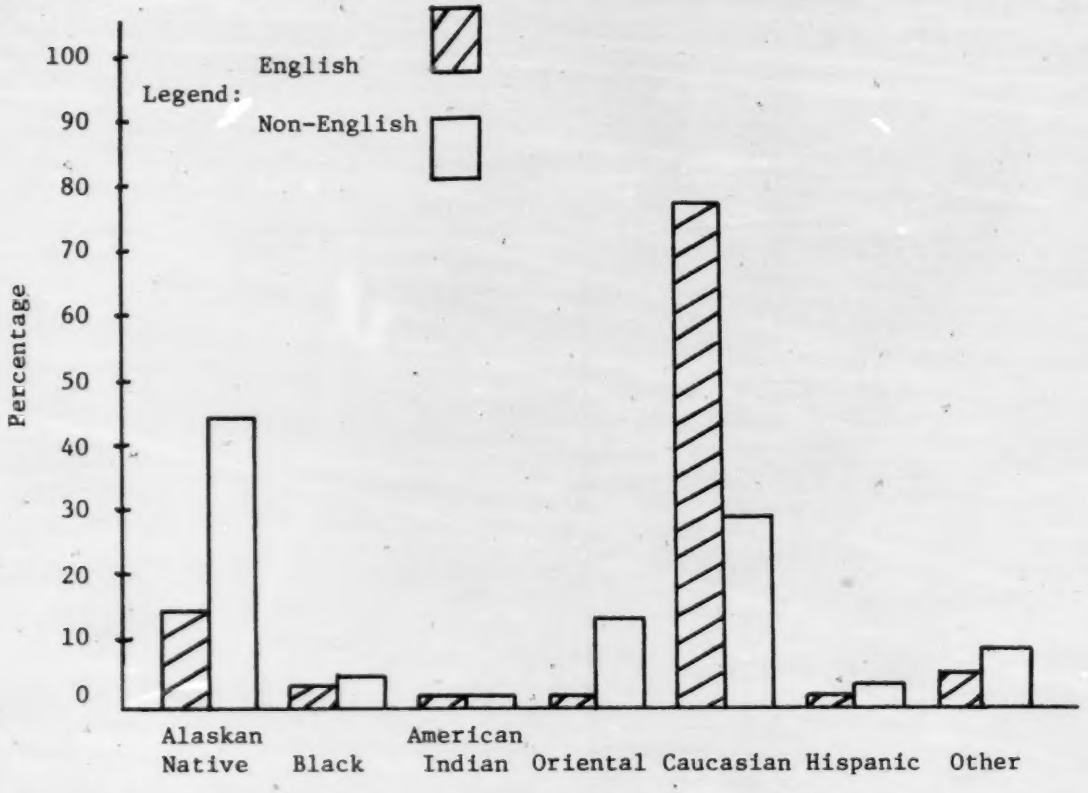

Figure 2. Distribution of Seniors by Race by Primary Home Language.

Sex of Respondent with regard to postsecondary educational plans, the sex of the respondent seemed to make little difference. As can be seen in Table 10, however, the female seniors indicated a higher propensity for attending a two or four-year college than did the male seniors (56% as compared to 46%). The only other post high school plans which reflected much of a difference between the males and females were technical school attendance and apprentice program participation, with both having a slight preference by the male seniors.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND SEX

Post High School Plans	Male	Female	Total
Four-Year College	32%	38%	35%
Two-Year College	8	11	9
Two-then Four-Year College	6	7	7
Technical School	6	2	4
Business or Trade School	9	9	9
Apprentice Program	8	3	5
Homemaker	--	2	1
Military	4	1	2
Full-Time Job	6	7	7
Undecided	21	20	21
Total	100%	100%	100%

Ratings of High School Experiences. Not too surprisingly, those seniors who rated their overall high school experiences as outstanding or excellent were most likely to plan collegiate attendance and were least likely to be undecided about their post high school plans. Those who rated their experiences as not so good or bad were least likely to plan to go on to college and slightly more likely to plan to work full-time after high school. (See Table 11)

TABLE 11

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND RATING OF HIGH SCHOOL

Post High School Plans	Overall Rating of High School			Total
	Outstanding/ Excellent	Good/ Average	Not So Good/ Bad	
Four-Year College	48%	33%	25%	35%
Two-Year College	9	10	9	9
Two-Then Four-Year College	6	7	6	7
Technical School	3	4	5	4
Business or Trade School	6	10	14	9
Apprentice Program	4	6	5	5
Homemaker	1	1	--	1
Military	2	2	6	2
Full-Time Job	7	6	10	7
Undecided	14	21	20	21
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Need for Additional Training or Education. As reported earlier, substantial numbers of seniors felt they needed more help in career counseling and math. Of those students planning on attending a two or four-year college, this feeling of need was also reflected; however, nearly a third of these seniors also felt the need for improved writing and reading skills. Those students planning to attend a technical or business or trade school or enter apprenticeship training were the least likely to feel the need for additional help in planning their future, while, not unexpectedly, those still undecided about post high school plans, reflected the greatest need for such assistance. The results of cross-tabulation are presented in Table 12.

TABLE 12

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND NEED OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Post High School Plans	Need of Addition Assistance In			
	Writing	Reading	Math	Career Planning
Two-or Four-Year College	38%	32%	44%	39%
Technical, Trade, Business, Apprenticeship	36	34	39	34
Homemaker, Military, Job	35	31	36	41
Undecided	26	26	34	49

G. Determinants Effecting Senior Choices of Postsecondary Educational Institutions.

The seniors were asked not only if they planned to attend a postsecondary educational institution, but also where they intended to enroll and why they made their particular choice. Additionally, through cross-tabulation of responses to other items in the questionnaire, a number of correlational variables could also be tested.

Occupational Choice. Since a large number of students had indicated (as reported earlier) that the availability of programs was a very important determinant in selecting a postsecondary educational institution, a cross-tabulation was run between planned occupational choice and institution of planned enrollment. Unfortunately, the sample sizes and cell sizes were so small that little conclusive information could be inferred. Looking only at those seniors indicating Alaskan attendance, we found little pattern relating occupation choice to college selection. In fact, most fields were fairly evenly distributed between community colleges and university centers or were heavily skewed toward business, trade, or technical schools.

Principal Determinants. The two principal reasons for students to leave Alaska for a postsecondary educational program (or at least plan to leave) were program availability and reputation or prestige of the institution which they planned to attend.

This was particularly true of those students planning to attend an institution in California or Colorado. As reported in Table 13, the two principal California determinants were reputation and prestige of the school (32%) and availability of a desired program of study (21%); while the two principal Colorado determinants reversed those to be, availability of a program of study (31%) and institutional reputation and prestige (20%).

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY
STATE OF PLANNED ATTENDANCE AND REASON FOR ATTENDING

State of Attendance	Principal Reason for Selection of Institution				
	Program Availability	Reputation/ Prestige	Climate/ Location	Close to Home	Other
Alaska	19%	8%	4%	32%	37%
All Out-of-State	21	21	12	11	37
Washington	27	22	11	11	29
California	21	32	16	3	28
Oregon	23	18	15	8	46
Colorado	31	20	15	1	33
Hawaii	19	10	32	3	36

Climate and location unquestionably play a large role in determining where Alaskan seniors plan to go to school (as many persons have hypothesized), especially for those heading for Hawaii, but the fact remains that 42% of seniors listed their main reason for leaving the state as either program

availability or reputation and prestige of the institution. For those students planning to remain in Alaska, the principal reason was closeness to home (32%), followed by program availability, low tuition and living expenses, and parental or relative encouragement.

Looking closer at the Alaskan institutional selections and eliminating closeness to home as the determining criteria, one finds that the same pattern of decision-making apparently holds true for all institutions, except the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, as for selecting to remain in-state rather than leaving. For the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, institutional reputation and prestige play a large factor. As can be seen in Table 14, of those Alaskan seniors who reported that institutional reputation and prestige was their principal basis for post-secondary institutional selection, 35% chose the University of Alaska-Fairbanks as their institution of preferred attendance, followed the University of Alaska-Anchorage and Anchorage Community College. Also, in Table 14, one finds that these same institutions are selected by 67% of the seniors who report their principal determinant as being availability of program.

TABLE 14

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS REPORTING
PROGRAM AVAILABILITY or INSTITUTIONAL REPUTATION AS
PRINCIPAL SELECTION DETERMINANT BY SELECTED ALASKAN INSTITUTION

Alaskan Institution	Program Availability		Institutional Reputation/Prestige	
Anchorage Community College	21%		19%	
Juneau-Douglas Community College	*		--	
Kenai Penninsula Community College	1		2	
Ketchikan Community College	--		--	
Kodiak Community College	*		--	
Kuskokwim Community College	*		--	
Matanuska-Susitna Community College	*		--	
Northwest Community College	--		--	
Sitka Community College	--		1	
Tanana Valley Community College	2		2	
Community College Sub-Total		27		24
University of Alaska-Anchorage	24		25	
University of Alaska-Fairbanks	22		35	
University of Alaska-Juneau	--		--	
University Center - Sub-Total		46		60
Alaska Methodist University	*		2	
Inupiat University	--		1	
Sheldon Jackson College	3		2	
Private College Sub-Total		4		5
University of Alaska-Extension	2		--	
Business or Trade School	21		11	
Total	100%		100%	

* Response indicated, but less than 1%.

SUMMARY REMARKS

A great deal of data was collected as a result of this survey, however, due in part to survey design, in part to non-participation of certain districts, and in part to the lack of a historical comparative base, definitive conclusions and certain specific analyses results were unable to be determined. With the planned annual continuation of the senior survey, a much better profile of Alaskan seniors and their postsecondary plans will be obtained.

For the present we can make a few general observations:

1. Alaskan high school seniors are quite satisfied with their high school experiences.

2. A large number of seniors feel in need of additional assistance or education in deciding on a career or education, improving mathematics skills, expressing ideas in writing, and improving reading skills. Although high school counseling and guidance services are rated favorably, it would appear that more emphasis on assisting the student in planning postsecondary activities should be considered.

3. The trend for Alaskans to look "outside" for their postsecondary educational needs does not appear to be abetting. The great majority of seniors who plan to pursue education at a postsecondary level, plan to leave Alaska.

4. The reasons for the seniors' choices of an educational institution or whether to remain in Alaska or not (for postsecondary attendance) are not nearly so haphazard or idyllic as many persons have predicted. Whether it is based upon faulty information, lack of information, or fact, Alaskan seniors feel their academic choices are better out of state. Desired postsecondary educational programs are felt to be more available (or better in the case of duplicative offerings) out-of-state than in, and the prestige and reputation of the out-of-state institutions is felt to be higher than that of Alaskan institutions. This coupled with the apparent ineffectiveness of institutional recruiters has strong implications for Alaskan schools. (As a note: it would be interesting and possibly quite revealing to determine upon what basis these opinions have been formed -- peers, counselors, teachers, parents, school catelogues, etc.)

5. The private business and trade schools appear to be quite effective in recruiting and in meeting the needs of Alaska students. These schools rated quite highly on program availability (i.e., the students wishing such training knew where it is to be sought) and were among the very few to receive favorable responses to institutional representatives.

6. Since such comparative data are unavailable from the university system, it is impossible to determine whether or not the actual attendance patterns of the Alaska seniors reflect the intentions indicated through the survey; however, it would appear that contrary to total student numbers, the university centers within Alaska have a stronger drawing power among the high school seniors then do the community colleges within Alaska.

To conclude that further study is needed seems to be a pattern of all survey research, but it is obvious that in this case, such a conclusion is quite justifiable.

If we are to plan effectively for the utilization of Alaska's postsecondary educational resources, more information must be made available. The results of this survey form the very minimal foundation for further study and planning. We must discover what Alaskans need and desire in the form of postsecondary education and which methods of delivery are practical and feasible. Alaska expends more per capita for postsecondary education than any State in the union, it is past time to begin effective planning for these expenditures.

APPENDIX A

1977-78 ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SURVEY

1977-78 ALASKAN HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SURVEY

This year, for the first time, three agencies have coordinated their efforts to find out a little more about you and what you intend to do with your life the first few years after high school. And although that is the main purpose of this survey, in order to make your answers more meaningful, we also need to ask a few other questions about you, your high school, and the community you live in. The results of the survey will be used to plan for the growth and development of postsecondary education* in Alaska, to coordinate and plan for better financial aid services for Alaskan postsecondary students, and to provide information to your school district through your high school counselors, principal, and teachers.

Your cooperation is appreciated. Please answer every question. (In most cases all you need to do is place a check in the appropriate box).

*NOTE: Postsecondary education is defined as any organized educational, learning experience beyond high school.

* *

1.0 What is your sex:

____ 1.01 Male
____ 1.02 Female

2.0 How do you describe yourself?

____ 2.01 Alaska Native
____ 2.02 Black
____ 2.03 American Indian
____ 2.04 Oriental
____ 2.05 Caucausian
____ 2.06 Hispanic
____ 2.07 Other

3.0 Which of the following categories best describes the size of the community in which you live?

____ 3.01 Less than 50 population
____ 3.02 100 - 499
____ 3.03 500 - 999
____ 3.04 1,000 - 4,999
____ 3.05 5,000 - 19,999
____ 3.06 20,000 - 49,000
____ 3.07 50,000 or more

4.0 Listed below are are a number of characteristics of your high school which you are asked to rank based on how beneficial they have been to <u>you</u>. That is, how well did they contribute to your experience as a student? Were you satisfied that you were "getting your money's worth"? Please use the following ranking scale and place the appropriate number in the box provided by each characteristic listed. Please use your own experience for the ranking, not what you have heard from others.

1 . . . Outstanding (not much room for improvement)
2 . . . Excellent (but could make at least one suggestion for improvement)
3 . . . Good (but not all of my experiences were satisfying)
4 . . . Average (okay, or so-so, but nothing to get excited about)
5 . . . Not so good (school tried to provide this for me, but it didn't seem to work out very well)
6 . . . Bad (this was really bad, but still better than nothing)
7 . . . Not provided, or no experience with this

____ 4.01 Variety of courses
____ 4.02 Quality of instruction
____ 4.03 Counseling or guidance services
____ 4.04 Library or learning center facilities
____ 4.05 Special help for students needing it
____ 4.06 Special programs or facilities for outstanding students
____ 4.07 School rules and regulations
____ 4.08 Discipline
____ 4.09 Promotion policy or practice
____ 4.10 Assignment of grades or marks
____ 4.11 Laboratory facilities or special equipment
____ 4.12 Athletic or recreational facilities
____ 4.13 Vocational training (industrial, business, home economics, etc.)

5.0 ____ Using the same scale as above, indicate your satisfaction with your overall high school experience.

6.0 ____ Using the attached list, select the item that represents your <u>first</u> choice of an occupation.

7.0 ____ Do the same for your second choice of an occupation.

8.0 Is English the language most frequently spoken in you home?

____ 8.01 Yes
____ 8.02 No

9.0 Please indicate your work experience by checking as many items listed below as apply.

____ 9.01 Held a regular part-time job (for example, waitress, sales clerk, delivered newspapers, etc.)
____ 9.02 Held a full-time job during the summer
____ 9.03 Earned money be selling goods (magazines, craft items, etc.) or services (baby-sitting, snow-shoveling, lawn mowing, etc.)
____ 9.04 Participated in work-study, or distributive education or cooperative work program while in high school
____ 9.05 Started my own business
____ 9.06 Supervised the work of others
____ 9.07 Managed the financial affairs of a business or organization.
____ 908 No work experience at all

10.0 In which of the following areas do you think you need some more assistance?

____ 10.01 Expressing ideas in writing
____ 10.02 Improving reading speed or comprehension
____ 10.03 Improving math skills
____ 10.04 Deciding on a career or occupation, or educational plans

11.0 Do you intend to take any of the following examinations this year?

ACT (American College Testing Program)

____ 11.01 Yes
____ 11.02 No

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test

____ 11.03 Yes
____ 11.04 No

12.0 What are you most likely to do after high school?

____ 12.01 Attend a four-year college
____ 12.02 Attend a two-year college
____ 12.03 Attend a two-year college and then transfer to another institution
____ 12.04 Attend a public technical school
____ 12.05 Attend a private business or trade school
____ 12.06 Get into an apprentice training program
____ 12.07 Attend a private business or trade school
____ 12.08 Become a full-time homemaker
____ 12.09 Join the military
____ 12.10 Get a full-time civilian job
____ 12.11 Just take things as they come for awhile, then decide
____ 12.12 Get into a trade upon apprenticeship program
____ 12.13 Don't know yet

If you plan to go on to some form of postsecondary education such as business school, college, technical school, trade school, etcetera, please answer the remaining questions. Please answer this section even if you only think you may go on for more schooling after high school. Otherwise, skip the rest of this survey.

13.0 In which state do you plan to attend a postsecondary institution?

____ 13.01 Alaska
____ 13.02 California
____ 13.03 Colorado
____ 13.04 Hawaii
____ 13.05 Idaho
____ 13.06 Oregon
____ 13.07 Utah
____ 13.08 Washington
____ 13.09 Other

14.0 If you plan to attend a postsecondary institution in Alaska, please indicate which one.

____ 14.01 Anchorage Community College
____ 14.02 Juneau-Douglas Community College
____ 14.03 Kenai Peninsula Community College
____ 14.04 Ketchikan Community College
____ 14.05 Kodiak Community College
____ 14.06 Kuskokwim Community College
____ 14.07 Matanuska-Susitna Community College
____ 14.08 Sitka Community College
____ 14.09 Tanana Valley Community College, Fairbanks
____ 14.10 University of Alaska, Anchorage
____ 14.11 University of Alaska, Fairbanks
____ 14.12 University of Alaska, Juneau
____ 14.13 Alaska Methodist University
____ 14.14 Sheldon Jackson College
____ 14.15 Inupiat University of the Arctic
____ 14.16 Business school, technical institute, or trade school
____ 14.17 Extension center near home

15.0 Regardless of where you are going on to school, why do you think you made that choice? Please indicate your most important reason by placing a 1 in the appropriate box. If you had a second important reason, please place a 2 in the appropriate box, and so on through 5. Do not indicate more than five reasons.

____ 15.01 Reputation or prestige of the school program
____ 15.02 Availability of program
____ 15.03 Availability of student financial aid
____ 15.04 Close to home
____ 15.05 Geographic location/weather, climate
____ 15.06 Low tuition and living expenses

-Continued-

___ 15.07 Availability of jobs while in school
___ 15.08 Availability of campus housing
___ 15.09 Intercollegiate athletic program
___ 15.10 Intramural athletics and other recreational activities
___ 15.11 Sororities/fraternities on campus
___ 15.12 Student organizations
___ 15.13 Encouragement from parents/relatives
___ 15.14 Encouragement from teacher/counselor/principal
___ 15.15 Encouragement from college representative
___ 15.16 Religious atmosphere
___ 15.17 My friends will be there
___ 15.18 Because one or both of my parents went there
___ 15.19 Because I wanted to see at least part of the Lower 48

16.0 Please indicate which of the student financial assistance programs you are familiar with to the point you understand how they work.

___ 16.01 BEOG (Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Program)
___ 16.02 GSL (Guaranteed Student Loan Program)
___ 16.03 Alaska State Student Loan Program
___ 16.04 WICHE (Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education Student Exchange Program)
___ 16.05 Native Corporation Student Financial Aid
___ 16.06 CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act)
___ 16.07 BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) Financial Assistance
___ 16.08 None of the above

17.0 Which of the following sources of financial assistance do you intend to use?

___ 17.01 BEOG
___ 17.02 GSL
___ 17.03 Alaska State Student Loan
___ 17.04 WICHE
___ 17.05 Native Corporation
___ 17.06 CETA
___ 17.07 BIA
___ 17.08 None of the above

APPENDIX B

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

TABLE 15

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SEX

Sex	Number	Percent
Male	1,265	51
Female	1,231	49
No Response	3	--
Total	2,499	100

TABLE 16

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY RACE

Race	Number	Percent
Alaska Native	381	15
Black	63	3
American Indian	25	1
Oriental	33	1
Caucasian	1,877	75
Hispanic	17	1
Other	86	3
No Response	17	1
Total	2,499	100

TABLE 17

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY

Size of Community	Number	Percent
Less than 50	16	--
51 - 499	196	8
500 - 999	186	7
1,000 - 4,999	545	22
5,000 - 19,999	495	20
20,000 - 49,999	131	5
50,000 or more	888	36
No Response	42	2
Total	2,499	100

TABLE 18

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY PRIMARY HOME LANGUAGE

Primary Spoken Home Language	Number	Percent
English	2,314	93
Other	94	3
No Response	91	3
Total	2,499	100

TABLE 18

DISTRIBUTION OF SENIORS BY WORK EXPERIENCE

Type of Work	Yes		NO		TOTAL	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
Part-Time Job	1,855	74	644	26	2,499	100
Summer Job	1,706	68	793	32	2,499	100
Sales Person	1,398	56	1,101	44	2,499	100
Work Study, Coop	669	27	1,830	73	2,499	100
Self-Employed	170	7	2,329	93	2,499	100
Supervised Others	660	26	1,839	74	2,499	100
Managed Financial Affairs	261	11	2,238	89	2,499	100
No Work Experience	63	3	2,436	97	2,499	100